

The Reconstruction Bill.

THE INJUNCTION FILED IN BEHALF OF THE
STATE OF MISSISSIPPI.

WASHINGTON, April 4.

The bill to be filed by Judge Sharkey
and Robert J. Walker, in the Supreme
Court of the United States to-morrow, is
the complaint of the State of Mississippi
in behalf of herself and such other States
as may be interested in the premises, who
shall, by consent of the Court, properly
make themselves parties hereto, against
Andrew Johnson, a citizen of the State of
Tennessee, and President of the United
States; and also against Gen. E. O. C. Ord.

The petition sets forth at length the his-
tory of the formation of the State of Mis-
sissippi, claiming beside the protection of
the Constitutional rights of a State, that
there are compact fundamental, irrevoca-
ble, and unalterable, securing forever to
the State of Mississippi her rights as a
State of the Union. Such compact and the
rights acquired under them the peti-
tioners believe this Court will regard it as
its duty to maintain in the same manner
at least as it would enforce between indi-
viduals by injunction or otherwise, the
specific performance of contracts. The
argument is made that the Congress of the
United States cannot constitutionally expel
Mississippi from the Union; and that any
attempt which practically does so, is a
nullity; and that there is no provision in
the constitution of the United States,
which subjects her as a State to any pains,
penalties, or forfeitures, as a consequence
of such void attempt of a portion of her
people to withdraw from the Union. All
powers to punish a State by expulsion, or
otherwise, from any cause, having been
expressly refused in the Convention which
framed the Federal Constitution, she avers
that her citizens lost none of their political
rights, nor incurred any penalties except
what might be inflicted upon them as in-
dividuals by due process of law, after a
trial by jury in courts having jurisdiction
of their offenses; and that disabilities at-
tempted to be imposed upon her or upon
her citizens, otherwise than as aforesaid,
by any body of persons, are void and viola-
tions of the Constitution of the United
States, as well as of the compact with
Georgia in 1802, and with Virginia in
1867. She avers she has exhibited her
good faith and adherence to the Constitu-
tion by electing Senators and Representa-
tives to Congress, and complains that they
have been wrongfully excluded, and that
her people have been compelled to pay the
taxes and bear the burdens of government
without representation. The Act to pro-
vide for the more efficient government of
the rebel States, and the Act supplement-
ary thereto utterly annihilate the State
and its government, by assuming for Con-
gress the power to control, modify and
even abolish its government; in short to
exercise sovereign power over it, and the
utter destruction of the State must be the
consequence of their execution. The
scope of power vested in the military com-
manders, so broad, so comprehensive, was
never before vested in the military com-
mander in any Government which guards
the rights of its citizens of subjects by
laws. The bill of complaint concludes as
follows:

"Now the complainant expressly charges
that from information and belief, the said
Andrew Johnson, President, in violation
of the Constitution, and in violation of the
sacred rights of the States, will proceed,
notwithstanding his vetoes, and as a
mere ministerial duty to the execution of
said acts as though they were the law of
the land, which the vetoes prove he would
not do if he had any discretion, or that in
doing so he performed anything more than
a ministerial duty, with a view to the ex-
ecution of said acts, the said Andrew John-
son has assigned military commanders to
the several districts to carry them into
complete and full execution, and for this
purpose has assigned Gen. E. O. C. Ord,
a citizen of the State of Maryland, to the
command of the States of Mississippi and
Arkansas whom complainant prays may
be made a defendant to this bill, and
complainant further avers that the said
Gen. E. O. C. Ord will speedily enter on
the discharge of said duties unless re-
strained by this honorable Court; and
complainant would further show that many
legal questions must arise under these
bills, if the government contemplated by
them be carried out, which sooner or later
must come before this Court for final ad-
judication; and it is believed that these bills
will ultimately be decided unconstitutional
in their whole length and breadth, and as
a consequence all acts that may have been
done under them must be declared void,
even to the constitution which may be
formed under them. The mischiefs that
must result from such a state of things are
incalculable and without number, not only
in regard to the rights of property, but for
punishments inflicted without authority;
a total disorganization of the present Gov-
ernment, inasmuch as no elections can be
held to fill the State offices; a state of
anarchy must intervene until the Govern-
ment can be again reorganized by the peo-
ple. Therefore, public policy, the good
order of society, the safety of a people,
call loudly for speedy redress. And the
complainant also charges that this bill is
filed as a bill of peace and to prevent end-
less suits and controversies, inasmuch as
the execution of the acts must produce
such an endless variety of legislation as to
disturb the good order of society by driv-
ing aggrieved parties to seek redress
against officers and others who may com-
mit trespasses and crimes against the inno-
cent. To prevent such evils is one of the
common grounds of equity jurisdiction;
and the complainant avers that this appeal
is made to the honorable court, in good
faith and not from factions motives, or
from a spirit of insubordination to law;

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The Crowning Insult of the Hour.

In view of the fact that the feeble and
often defeated Democracy of the North
have recently given symptoms of re-
stored life and vigor, the recent speech
(at Petersburg) of Wilson, of Massachu-
setts, is full of meaning.

In that speech the Southern people are
solemnly warned against placing any
confidence in either the strength or good
intention of the Northern Democracy.
After the fashion of a certain sulphurous
personage, who figures largely in sacred
and profane history, the Natick shoema-
ker takes the Southern people up "into a
lofty mountain," and, while denouncing
the Northern Democracy, tempts them
with splendid promises of future rewards
if they will only sell their souls to the
political miscreants who have delibera-
tely annihilated our civil rights, disfran-
chised our ablest and purest men, and en-
franchised every male negro in the State.
Coming among a people thus outraged,
humiliated and trampled upon by himself
and his party, he lifts his brazen voice
and proclaims that he has not sought to
humiliate the South; neither does he de-
sire that the ban of prolonged disfran-
chisement shall rest upon a class of South-
ern statesmen, the lachets of whose shoes
this vulgar and insolent demagogue is un-
worthy to loosen. Reeking from the most
active and venomous participation in the
flagitious legislation which has de-
prived us of all our rights, he has dared
to advise the victims of his coarse and
brutal fury as to their future political
course. And the truculent impudence of
this ignorant demagogue almost touches
the limits of the sublime when he recom-
mends for our especial admiration, re-
spect and love the party which has de-
stroyed every vestige of our political
rights and left us at the mercy of the
soldier. The advice of Wilson smacks so
strongly of the "Pirate's Own Book,"
that we doubt not he is thoroughly sat-
urated with the morality of that species of
unwholesome literature. A merchant-
man is overtaken and captured by a pi-
rate. The prize is robbed of every article
of value, the unfortunate sailors either
have their throats cut or are made to
walk the plank, the captain of the cap-
tured vessel is murdered in the presence
of his shrieking wife by the commander
of the pirate ship who, while coolly
wiping the blood of the murdered hus-
band from his cutlass, proposes an alliance
with his heart-broken widow, and urges
his suit by the tender assurance that if
his offers are rejected she will be handed
over to his brutal crew. Wilson's Radica-
lism to the Southern people to hug Radica-
lism to their breasts is strictly in keeping
with the above. He has added insult to
the most terrible injuries ever inflicted by
a conqueror pretending to civilization
upon a defeated nation, by asking us to
support a party which has been more
merciless in legislation than the soldier
was in the heat of battle.

We regard this man's speech at Peters-
burg as the crowning outrage of two
years of oppression, and insult of an un-
armed people, and there is not a Vir-
ginian with one spark of manliness in his
bosom who will not spurn the thought of
affiliation with the party which Wilson
represents, and which has crushed our
liberties and stripped Lee, Hunter, Wise
and thousands of good and able men of
political rights which they have given to
the most ignorant and demoralized blacks.

This coarse and illiterate tempter of the
people of a proud and noble old State re-
commends for our approval a party which
has proclaimed the absolutism of majorities
The maxim of his party is that all the
guarantees of the Constitution must yield
to the mandates of the mob. His own
votes proclaim that there can be no per-
sonal rights, no private rights of property,
no inalienable rights, which a furious,
blind majority cannot trample upon, pol-
lute and disregard through their agents
in Congress. It has been justly and elo-
quently remarked by a distinguished
journalist, that from "one-third of our
people the protection of law has just been
withdrawn by solemn and deliberate act
of Congress. In the ten unconstructed
States there exists to-day no organic or
statutory law, no law to protect personal
liberty or life. Ten millions of people (by
Wilson and his party) have been delib-
erately placed in this condition. Redress
for wrongs, protection against violence to
person or property, we have none but the
will of a military dictator. Verdicts of
juries, decisions of judges, avail us nothing
if they do not meet the approval of the
soldier. White and black, helpless women
and children, are all condemned to live
for an indefinite period with no protection
against spoliation or injury by unscrupu-
lous neighbors, except in such possible
justice as the armed despot may permit.
Widows and orphans, even, cannot succeed
to an inheritance without his permission.
Did the disfranchised, outlawed and insult-
ed people of Petersburg, who listened to
Wilson when he pleaded the cause of Radica-
lism, think of these things, and re-
member that all of their wrongs are the
first fruits of that party, whose virtues,
humanity and charity the speaker blatin-
gly advocated. Oh! for an hour of the in-
dignant eloquence of some gifted South-
ern man to have torn the flimsy, impudent
harangue of the missionary from Massa-
chusetts into shreds and tatters. How
bitterly would the shallow and insolent
charlatan have repented his rashness, had
some honored Southern Statesman then
and there taught him that we were not
Philistines, to be conquered by that pri-
mitive weapon which was so effective in
the hands of Samson.

The people of the South, while they are
without rights, and hold their lives and
fortunes at the mercy of the soldier, should
carefully abstain from all interference with
the political parties of the North. With

their intrigues, quarrels, tactics and con-
ventions we have absolutely nothing to do.
We are powerless and voiceless in the
halls of so-called national legislation, and
to us the politics of the North are those
of a foreign nation. It becomes us simply
to make our condition as endurable as
possible, and the instincts of self-preserva-
tion requires us to perform certain duties,
lest we suffer from supineness and de-
fault.

It is scarcely necessary to say that
while we are outlawed and held by the
stern dross of the bayonet, no gentleman,
no decent man--no demagogue, indeed,
but one of the lowest type, would insult
our wrongs, our griefs and humiliation as
Wilson has done. The most callous ex-
ecutioner spares, upon the scaffold, the feel-
ings of his victim, and no Radical, who is
not a vulgar charlatan, would attempt
while we are pinned to the earth by the
bayonet, to harangue us in praise of the
humanity and charity of the destroyers
of our liberties.

If Thaddeus Stevens was to appear
among us proclaiming confiscation and
exile as our fate, he would merit our re-
spect far more than a Puritan demagogue
who, with the blood of our liberties fresh
upon his hands, comes among us smelling
of the shambles, to tempt us with prom-
ises of relief if we will endorse and sustain
the authors of our unparalleled wrongs
and insults.---*Richmond Times.*

Washington News and Gossip.

WASHINGTON, April 11.

The President's illness will probably pro-
long the Senatorial session.

The Georgia petition is signed by
Messrs. Black, Brent, Cowan and O'Con-
or, with a certificate of the Georgia Gov-
ernor attached. It prays an injunction
against Stanton, Grant and Pope. The
proceedings in the Court to-morrow, is
looked for with intense anxiety. Some
New York papers have made arrange-
ments for verbatim reports of the argu-
ment. The proof of Georgia's petition
was read last night by Charles O'Connor,
who probably wrote it.

The amount paid for Russian America
was \$7,200,000, and not \$10,000,000, as
reported.

The following papers have been named
by the Clerk of the House as official or-
gans: "Republican Tribune" and "Herald,"
New Orleans; "Meridian" and "Chronicle,"
and Vicksburg; "Republican," Mississippi;
Little Rock, "Republican," Arkansas. Two
in Florida, two in South Carolina and one
in Texas have not yet been named.

Rousseau has been finally confirmed a
Brigadier-General.

Charles O'Connor, in the Supreme
Court, to-day, asked leave to hand to the
Clerk of the Court the petition of the
State of Georgia, which, to-morrow, he
intends to ask leave to file. The Court
said he could do so. Attorney-General
Stanberry said this petition differed from
that of Mississippi; in fact, that the Presi-
dent was not made a party in the injunc-
tion; and further stated that Stanton, in
behalf of the military authority, had re-
quested him to take entire control of the
defence. The Court was requested, but
declined to take the order as to the ar-
rangement for arguing this question; it is
probable, however, that the motion to file
two petitions will be jointly argued.

In the Senate, a resolution was intro-
duced calling on the President for any
legal opinions officially given him regard-
ing the tenure of office bill; passed.---
Resolutions fixing the day for adjourn-
ment occasioned a characteristic debate,
and developed the fact that the Senate is
willing to divide the offices--half radicals
and half Democrats; but the President is
firm in his determination to adhere to his
friends. In reply to the argument that
unless the President yielded, during the
recess, of placing persons in office objec-
tionable to the Senate, he should be put
out of the way in July, Fessenden replied
that the President, equally with the Sen-
ate, was part of the Government, and
might, with equal propriety, threaten to
put the Senate out of the way unless it
accepted the measures. The whole ques-
tion was indefinitely postponed.

Applications from 153 former United
States officers, 54 members of Congress
and 104 prominent Confederate officers
are on file in the Attorney-General's office
for pardon.

It is said the President has legal advice
of his right--the Senate failing to confirm
his nominations--to fill offices vacated
previously to the passage of the tenure
of office bill.

WASHINGTON, April 12.

The Post Office building is lighted by
gas generated on the premises. James A.
Kennedy, Treasurer and Superintendent,
A. H. Doubleday and L. B. Moses,
clerks, went to the basement, to remedy
some gas difficulty, and carried a candle,
when a terrific explosion occurred; Mos-
es was killed, and the others are seriously,
though not fatally, hurt.

After a very long debate, the Senate
adopted a resolution to adjourn on Tues-
day.

The President's health has greatly im-
proved. He attended a Cabinet meeting to-day.

Maryland returns 7,000 majority for the
Convention.

In the Supreme Court, on the motion
to file the Mississippi bill, the Chief Jus-
tice said the motion to file a bill was usu-
ally granted as a matter of course, but
suggested that if the bill contains matter
scandalous or unfit to come before the
Court, the Court examines it or refers it
to a master. In this case, the Attorney-
General objects to the bill as containing
matter unfit to bring before the Court.
That is the only point which can now be
considered. Upon that point, the Court
will first hear the Attorney-General.

Mr. O'Connor announced himself and

associates in attendance, should it be de-
cided to argue both bills.

The Attorney-General said the Georgia
bill lacked the point on which he proposed
to oppose filing the Mississippi bill. The
Mississippi bill was, in a legal sense, scan-
dalous, as it proposed making the Presi-
dent the Defendant before the Court.

Gov. Sharkey said he had amended the
bill to proceed against the President as a
citizen of Tennessee.

Attorney-General Stanberry read por-
tions of the bill, claiming it was manifest-
ly against the President as President.
He alluded to a process somewhat similar
issued against Mr. Jefferson, in the Burr
trial. Mr. Jefferson did not obey, nor
even notice, the process. He should ad-
vise the President to disregard the sub-
poena, and traced the result, should the
Court persist and the President remain
firm. The Court, to maintain its dignity,
would have to imprison the President for
contempt. He maintained, equally with
the Kings of England, that the President
was exempt from proceedings of this kind.
He could only be brought before the bar
of the Senate after impeachment. The
Courts could punish for acts committed
while President, but he was beyond their
jurisdiction while occupying the chair.
He also maintained that the action was
against the United States Government as
much as though the Government were
named. He announced that he appeared
at the request of the President, who,
when the bills passed over his veto, said
there was but one duty, in his estimation,
resting upon him, and that was faithfully
to carry out and execute those laws.

R. J. Walker followed, and the Court
took the matter under advisement.

Visit to John H. Surratt.

A correspondent of the Baltimore Sun
visited John H. Surratt at the Washing-
ton jail recently, and writes a long account
of what he saw and heard. A considera-
ble portion of the letter is devoted to
showing how insecurely the prisoner is
kept and guarded. Indeed, so warmly
this point pressed, that it would almost
appear to be the correspondent's object to
have the prisoner deprived of some of the
privileges now allowed him. Surratt, ac-
companied by a jailor, was found in the
guard house in the prison yard. We quote
from the letter:

The prisoner was innocent of any en-
tanglement for his security, whatever. He
sat in a chair by one of the upper win-
dows, reading a small volume, the charac-
ter of which I did not inquire. On my
entrance he rose and advanced towards me
with extended hand. Not expecting
to meet so distinguished a character in
such a place, I was somewhat taken by
surprise when the name was pronounced,
and after shaking hands, ventured to in-
quire once again the name. "Surratt," re-
plied my new acquaintance, with a smile.
"I think I have heard of you before," I
remarked, to which he quietly responded,
"Very likely." He was dressed in a suit
of dark mixed goods, cut in the prevailing
fashion of a walking suit, evidently new.
Upon his head he wore a black soft felt
hat, also new. In stature I should judge
him to be five feet, nine or ten inches high,
rather slender in form--almost delicate,
perhaps--and apparently twenty-eight
years of age. His hair is very light au-
burn, nicely cut and trimmed, parted be-
hind and combed forward. He wears a
moustache and goatee, rather more posi-
tive in color than the hair on his head.---
The rest of his face was carefully shaved.
Altogether, his appearance was that of a
well-dressed and very presentable young
man--and certainly the last one that would
be selected from a crowd as a desperate
character or a villain. He has a very
pleasant voice, in conversation uses good
language, understands himself perfectly,
and usually wears a smile upon his face.

My conversation with this somewhat
remarkable man was not so full and free
as I could have wished. He evidently
was in no mood to talk on the topics that
were most prominent in my own mind,
and the witnesses to the interview pre-
cluded me from making any efforts to get
his confidence. After a few commonplace
remarks on the state of the weather and
such generalities as usually open up a
conversation, I ventured to ask him a
leading question in regard to his escape to
and concealment in Canada, to which, with
a smile only, he replied, "I have nothing
to say about that; but," he added, "there
was no secrecy about leaving Canada. I
went on board a steamer at midday, wholly
without disguise, and with hundreds of
people on and about the wharf. The
steamer had fully two hundred passengers,
with whom I associated freely during the
voyage. Nobody recognized me, though
there were those among the passengers
that I recognized." He could not say
what steamer this was, nor from what port
it sailed, more than that it was one of a regular
line leaving a large city.

He spoke of meeting St. Marie in France.
He claims that he recognized St. Marie
first, and that they traveled to Italy to-
gether. He manifests no vindictiveness
towards this witness for having discovered
him to the authorities, but considers him
a "treacherous" fellow and thinks he was
mistaken in his character. Surratt says
that he had information of St. Marie's
treachery before it was fully accomplished,
and was kept advised, from time to time,
of the steps taken to secure his arrest. Had
the actual arrest been delayed one day longer,
as Surratt had reason to expect it would
be, he would have been beyond the reach
of his pursuers, his arrangements for de-
sertion and flight being nearly perfected
at the time of his arrest. He is careful
to abstain from saying what those arrange-
ments were, who were his accomplices and
informers, or where he was to find a place
of refuge.

He has read with great apparent interest
the published account of his capture and

escapes, and the official correspondence
bearing on those points, and takes great
pleasure in criticising them. The won-
derful leap of the precipice in Italy, of
which so much has been said and written,
is a source of great amusement to him.---
The height from which he jumped he de-
scribes as about equal to an ordinary sec-
ond-story window, or say twelve feet.---
But he tells a story of descending more
dangerous declivities than this in his flight.
In one instance his only available mode of
descent was to lie upon his back and to
slide down a steep and rocky declivity,
full a hundred feet in height. Of want of
food, ignorance of the country and conse-
quent danger of recapture in exposing
himself by asking information by the way,
of the constant alarm and similar subjects,
he is free and seemingly anxious to talk,
and always in something of a boastful
vein, but his lips are sealed in respect to
all matters bearing in the remotest degree
upon the great crime with which his name
is associated and of which he stands
charged.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.---The New York
Journal of Commerce has a precautionary
article on the signs of the times with
reference to the financial and business fu-
ture. The laugh, it says, which once
greeted every allusion to possible trouble
is now heard less frequently in the ave-
nues of trade. The financial novices who
ridiculed the lessons of experience, and
taught that the heavier national debt the
greater blessing, are less glib in their
jibes to the veterans of the exchange, and
advocate their crude theories with less as-
surance than when the inflation was in
progress on the other side of the summit.
The manufacturing districts have felt a
sudden jar in their machinery, and are
surprised that there should be any check
to their prosperity while under the pro-
tection of the most favoring legislation.---
The smaller industries all over the land
have already begun to suffer. Enter-
prise has lost its eagerness, and adventure
folds its wings. There is unusual rest-
lessness everywhere. The consumers all
over the land buy sparingly, and seem to
have but little money. What has become
of the enormous receipts which filled
everybody's purse who had anything to
sell, until the high prices seemed a bless-
ing instead of a curse? Is the money
spent or hoarded? It does not circulate
as it did, and the rolls of greenbacks are
not as numerous or as plieoric as they
were last year. Has anybody found out
that high prices bring an offset in great
expenses, and that, in spite of high wages,
there is less in the workman's purse
than when he seemed to be toiling for a
pittance? The *Journal* asks, and adds:

"What is the impending danger? Sim-
ply the reaction after the debauch.---
When it comes a reckoning will be first
in order. Those who have betrayed
their trust, using funds which were not
their own, in the wild chase of sudden
wealth, will be caught, as in a trap, and
found wanting. There will be a legion of
defaulters. Those who have carried a
multitude of schemes in their hands will
come to the reckoning with great disap-
pointment, and will wonder, amid the gen-
eral shrinkage, what has become of the
riches on which they counted. Debts
will be tangible, fixed facts; and their
uncomfortable array will present a ghastly
spectacle against the vanishing assets
which will not wipe them out. A day of
reckoning and settlement will be a solemn
time for all, and the mocking lip will
forget to curl when this searching test re-
veals the ashes of what seemed the ri-
pened fruits of toil and providence. The
adjournment of Congress, and a cessation
of angry sectional discussions, may post-
pone the day of reckoning for a little
while; but it must come at last, and the
hosts of shams and delusions now so fond-
ly cherished, will shrivel and fade in its
revealing light."

A SUGGESTION FOR THE LADIES.---If any
of our pretty ladies should ever be called
before the courts as witnesses, we sug-
gest to them the following happy escape
from telling their age:

A certain French actress never would
tell her age, and of course the more she
refused to tell it the more curious people
were to know it. By good luck--as the
multitude thought--she was summoned as
a witness on a trial. The gossips rubbed
their hands and chuckled. "Ala! we
shall know it now. She must tell, or go
to prison for contempt of court." The
court was crowded with open-eared lis-
teners. In French courts of justice the
witness does not stand in a box to give
evidence, but sits on a stool, in the mid-
dle of the floor of the court, in front of
the president's desk, and with no barrier
or separation between it and himself. The
lady was ushered in, raised her hand to
Heaven, took the oath to speak the truth;
and then seated herself on the witness'
stool. "Your name?" asked the presi-
dent. "Angelique Tonjourfleure." "Your
profession?" "Artiste dramatique." "Your
age?" "You might have heard a pin drop
in the court, and every eye was bent on
the lady. She was driven into a corner
at last! Foolish Paris is prone to think
so! Angelique simply rose from her
seat, walked straight to the president's
desk, and whispered the secret in his ear.
He nodded, made the entry in his private
notes, and smiling, continued the rest of
his interrogatories as soon as she had re-
sumed her place on the stool. The public
retired with mingled feelings of disgust
and admiration. The trial had lost all
further interest; and the president was
known to be a man of honor and gallan-
try, who would never let a pretty woman's
cat escape from his presidential bag.

---What kind of essence does a young
man live when he pops the question? Ac-
quiescence.